

FOREWORD

Social Innovation in Urban and Regional Development: Contributing to a re-emerging discourse.

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People are not even aware that they are doing something socially innovative. This statement is a recurring theme when dealing with social innovation (SI) in the academic and policymaking context. Although there is a significant body of literature on social innovation and interdisciplinary research programmes have gained a visible impact¹ over time, there seems to be a gap between *debating* and *doing* social innovation. Catchwords such as scalability, institutionalization, the third sector and bottom-up practices illustrate the range of interest in SI, while self-organized citizens and grass-roots organisations apply counteracting mechanisms in their daily practices.

The International Summer School 2017 of the German Academy of Spatial Research and Planning (ARL) in cooperation with the University of Vienna and the Austrian Academy of Sciences has contributed to a broader understanding of SI in urban and regional development by discussing recent initiatives and strategies of SI within this field. Whereas the summer school provided the opportunity to showcase the historical context of SI as well as its (global) distribution and role in urban development, social housing and potential for scalability, this edited volume brings the ongoing research of early-career researchers into focus.

Chapter 1 draws on the “*Framework Conditions for Social Innovation*” and provides insights into the role of governance, community energy enterprises, post-disaster recovery processes and industrial ecology. Case studies draw on examples from New Orleans (United States), Lecce and Prato allo Stelvio (Italy) and the Dunkirk region (France). With a shift in spatial scales, Chapter 2, “*The Local Dimension of Social Innovation*”, consists of research on graffiti murals in Aachen (Germany), community-based sustainability practices in Redange (Luxembourg) and condominium

¹ For a literature overview and examination of 25 research projects on social innovation, see: Moulaert, F., A. Mehmood, D. MacCallum, B. Leubolt (eds.) (2017) *Social Innovation as a Trigger for Transformations. The Role of Research*. European Commission DG for Research and Innovation. European Commission.

management in Quilicura, Santiago (Chile). To complement the urban dimension of SI, Chapter 3 deals with the “*Regional Dimension of Social Innovation*”. Processes of (de-)peripheralization as well as the role of regional SI ecosystems and social resilience assessment are presented with examples from Eisenerz (Austria) and Behshahr (Iran). The variety of contributions by the ten PhD candidates from Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France and Belgium clearly illustrates the range and importance of SI research in order to close the gap between academic debates and daily practices at the local, city and regional level.

For this reason, we mobilized joint efforts to finalize this edited volume and look forward to responses from the audience. We would like to cordially thank Irene BIANCHI, Alexandre BREDIMAS, Jan-Tobias DOERR, Dmitri DOMANSKI, Stefanie DÖRINGER, Sanna FRISCHKNECHT, Christoph HILMER, Giulia MARRA, Frank MOULAERT, Stéphane OGÉ, Angeliki PAIDAKAKI, Maliheh HASHEMI TILENOI, Luca TRICARICO, Pieter VAN DEN BROECK and Luz María VERGARA for their paper contributions, active debates and for making this summer school an inspiring and enjoyable experience.

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Let's make people aware of their role as social innovators.

The organizers

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